

## Workshop 13: Global Responsibilities and Local Realities to Foster ESD through Institutional Frameworks

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### Conference Objective 1: To Highlight the Essential Contribution of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to All of Education and to Achieving Quality Education

#### Why is ESD relevant?

Education for Sustainable Development is a driver for Education for All (EFA). Sustainable development, by definition, requires empowerment and full participation of all stakeholders. Therefore, EFA is a necessary framework for the success of ESD. ESD provides an impetus for collaborative work at local, national and international levels. ESD is a driver for the inclusion of youth, women, indigenous and other people often left out of sustainable development strategies. For example, the Society Development Colleges in Sudan provide training for women in how to deal with scarcity of resources. ESD is not an "add-on"; it is a framework for quality education. It is inclusive of many important "adjectival" educations.

### Conference Objective 2: To Promote International Exchange on ESD

#### What can we learn from each other?

We should focus on sharing implementation strategies and supporting our ESD goals.

Sharing of resources, technology and training. Bilateral relationships in ESD at international level must foster mutual understanding and mutual benefits. For example, small island states in the Pacific need help with capacity-building. They benefit from resources provided by New Zealand; New Zealand benefits from the need and opportunity to adapt methods to a new ESD scenario. The Uganda National Commission for UNESCO has established a bilateral relationship with the Korean National Commission, and expects to establish additional partnerships to implement ESD. Among and within countries, capacity-building is facilitated by collaboration among stakeholders including government ministries, the corporate sector, non-governmental organizations, and community groups.

Sharing of models for coordination of efforts. In many countries, ESD efforts have been facilitated at national level. For example, in Uganda the National Commission for UNESCO effectively serves as a neutral negotiator among Government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. In Japan, round table conferences have been organized at ministry level for inclusion of all stakeholders in ESD, with the goal of providing resources such as curricula, texts, funding for projects, teacher training, and partnerships with scholars and other experts. Australia has completed its Second National Action Plan, with the Environment Ministry taking the lead. Government officials in the Environment and Education Ministries are working together on ESD programs. A research institute develops priorities for ESD implementation, and the Sustainable Schools Programme coordinates action learning projects around the country.

In France, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development plays an important role. A National Committee, composed of sixty representatives of government ministries, corporations and civil society, facilitates collaborative efforts. A national seminar is being organized to share information about different ESD initiatives in the country. The constitution of Lesotho recognises the importance of ESD, and strategies for implementation have been developed by the ESD National Task Force. Lesotho is also participating in the development of a new regional network for ESD in southern Africa, and Sudan hopes to strengthen regional collaboration as well. This kind of collaboration is especially important in areas with significant cross-border immigration and resource-management issues. In the Netherlands, the Learning for Sustainable Development programme is managed by the Ministry of Environment; other ministries have yet to become fully engaged in efforts to implement ESD, when there is little collaboration between the Ministries now. In the United States, where educational planning is decentralized, most ESD projects thus far have been initiated at local level; at national level, very little has been done to facilitate networking among stakeholders.

### Sharing of concerns about impediments to ESD, and the forging of political will to address those concerns.

Some of these concerns refer to legal issues. For example, in India traditional knowledge holders are reluctant to educate others about bio-resources because they have no internationally recognized legal rights to benefit from that knowledge. Resolution of this legal issue will increase access to knowledge important for sustainable development, and will increase indigenous participation in ESD. Patent applicants should be obliged to secure informed consent from traditional knowledge holders, with fair agreements for sharing of benefits. Traditional knowledge holders could be prepared for their role in patent negotiations through a vocational education certificate programme.

Other concerns are academic in nature. Centralized curriculum planning may assure national support for the implementation of ESD, or it may interfere with educational reforms necessary for implementation. On the other hand, in countries without centralized curriculum planning local initiatives may be readily adopted but it may be difficult to coordinate efforts. Access to education is a social justice issue. Informal and adult education opportunities promote ESD through the inclusion of stakeholders who have not benefited from access to formal educational experience; for example, women may be trained to serve as health educators in their communities, dealing with often sensitive issues such as sanitation and hygiene. Civil and international conflicts and wars often interfere with formal and informal educational opportunities, and with other programmes necessary for sustainable development. Strategies for peaceful resolution of conflicts must be part of any meaningful programme for ESD.

### **Conference Objective 3: To Carry out a Stock-taking of DESD Implementation**

#### **What have we achieved so far, what are the lessons learnt?**

Lessons learnt include: acknowledgement of the importance of coordinated efforts; an interdisciplinary focus; the inclusion of all sectors of society; the role of individuals as global actors in the Internet age; the use of Internet resources to further ESD goals, such as the use of Facebook in furthering foundation-led ESD goals in Dubai; the importance of other forms of networking such as conferences, festivals, mentoring relationships; and the importance of social learning.

### **Conference Objective 4: To Develop Strategies for the Way Ahead**

#### **Where do we want to go from here?**

It is important to overcome the compartmentalized approach to ESD, so we make more effective use of time, money, energy and other resources. We must make better use of United Nations resources. We must make better connections among elements of ESD in formal and informal educational settings. It is important to learn from case studies and demonstration projects. When we share very concrete examples, we are empowered to get beyond policy talk and start identifying which successes are adaptable to new circumstances.

We must support meaningful local, national and regional agencies to develop relevant ESD structures, but also collaborate internationally to implement ESD goals and objectives. We must collaborate to develop the political will and models for advocacy to make ESD a priority, as well as a framework, for education.

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